

# HERE ARE DETAILS OF BATTLE AND SKIRM RECONNAISSANCE AND PERSONAL AD

Woes of a War Correspondent; Improvised Armored Train; Bayonet Charge by the Gallant Yorkshire Boys.

Heroism of the Grenadiers at Belmont; Treachery of the Boers; the Death of Correspondent Knight.

Letters from the Beleaguered and the Prisoners; the Main Want of the Latter Seems to Be Cigarettes.

LONDON, Dec. 22 (Correspondence).—Mails from South Africa are bringing the first details of the fighting. War correspondents, unable by reason of the censorship to send descriptive matter by cable, are thrown back upon the slow mails. But though their accounts of battle and adventure are many weeks old, they make up for tardiness by picturesque description.

It has been a heart-breaking war from the correspondents' point of view. With only two cables to England, one of these not working more than half the time, the British Government using the other almost constantly, with censors at the front, at Cape Town, at Aden and presumably here in London, only the most meagre dispatches can come through. Hence the correspondents send only bulletins of battles and use the post for their real stories.

The following are excerpts from the latest letters from the front. Bennett Burleigh, correspondent of the Daily Telegraph with General Buller's army, sends extracts from the diary of a relative of the dead Boer General, Koch:

## Koch's Interesting Diary.

"Left with General Koch and Judge Koch for Standerton. Learned that two women refugees died on route.

"Oct. 5, Sandpruit.—Food is very scarce, water bad, nearly undrinkable, with the result that several men are suffering from diarrhoea. At Rodas Drift (General Koch) received a communication from the Free State Commandants Prinsloo and De Villiers to place himself in communication with them to act in view of coming events. Commandant Viljoen took our reply ('All right') to them at Tanges Hill.

"Oct. 7.—Communications were established on a permanent basis between the armies—Free State and Transvaal.

"Oct. 8 (Sunday).—Passed calmly. Went to church. Martin preached Luke xv. 24, and Deut. xxviii. 27. Told the burghers they were going to insure the independence of their country. Rumored that the English Ministers have resigned owing to the cabal. Reported that the Queen refused to sign the declaration of war. This is dissatisfying to the burghers, because most of them had pictured to themselves that the English Tommy Atkins would be beaten on his back (dogged), for which we had longed, as well as to be greeted by the ladies in Durban.

"Oct. 10.—Took Bothas Pass into our hands.

"Oct. 12.—Sent 600 men into Natal; also occupied Quagga's Nek."

## Balloons and Runners.

Mr. Burleigh illustrates the difficulties of getting news in this paragraph:

"At Estcourt I employed native runners, Kaffirs, and even fire balloons to try and get into communication with Ladysmith. Day by day the difficulties of penetrating the Boer lines increased, the enemy, learning of the 'English post,' placing a cordon of mounted men, extending from Lombard's Kop, round the south of town, to near Walker's Hoek. One or two times they succeeded in getting out by watching the position of the Boer pickets before breaking through at night.

"Owing to the weather and Ladysmith lying so low, heliographic signalling has so far proved a total failure. The messages exchanged have been with Boer heliographers, and but to-day, after interchanging camp compliments, our fellows bade the enemy 'Go bang!' which is bordered Tommy Atkins. I made several trips to Colenso in what we all call 'the death trap,' the armored train, in order to facilitate the dispatch of despatches to Ladysmith post. Natal, hilly and mountainous, is the least suitable of countries for armored trains."

## Armored Death Traps.

Speaking of armored trains, this is Mr. Burleigh's description of one:

"These we have are poorly extemporized affairs, though the best, perhaps, that could be done in a hurry. Imagine a few tin boiler plates placed round the engine, and flat bogie trucks boxed round seven feet high with similar sheets of iron or steel, and roughly loop-holed—the whole painted khaki—and you have the armored train."

"There being no doorways to get inside one of these oblong iron boxes, which are quite uncovered at the top, you have to clamber up as best you can, gripping the loopholes and exterior fastenings. Egress has to be made in the same manner. They were all right against rifle fire, except when in a cutting or passing under a hill, when an enemy might have you at his mercy by firing down into the open-topped trucks. It is a well-known lesson, also, that an armored train, except in an absolutely flat country, is unsuited for scouting or attack, unless backed and flanked by a friendly force of cavalry and guns. Our armored trains here are unprovided with Maxim or cannon."

## Fight at Beacon Hill.

The Westminster Gazette publishes the following description of the battle of Beacon Hill, near Willow Grange, Natal, on November 23, from the pen of Captain Campbell:

"Early on the morning of the 23d General Hildyard went out with the mounted infantry to locate the enemy, whom he found on some hills five miles southward, near Willow Grange. The camp was ordered to prepare for three days in the field; a short artillery duel took place in the evening. Next day the infantry marched on in the afternoon and took up their



ONE OF THE BRITISH FORTS AT KURUMAN  
125 MILES NORTHWEST OF KIMBERLEY  
CAPTURED BY THE BOERS



THE FATAL MISTAKE AT TALANA HILL  
(BRITISH SHELLED THEIR OWN MEN)  
LONDON GRAPHIC

## Scenes and Incidents in Some Hot Fights.

The Boers have captured two British forts near Kuruman, northwest of Kimberley, after a hard-fought battle. The upper left hand picture is a photograph of one of these little outposts. The upper right hand picture shows how the Boers concealed themselves behind rocks when Methuen advanced north of the Modder River. The lower picture depicts one of the most unfortunate incidents of the war, when several officers and men were killed through being mistaken for Boers and fired on by their own artillery.

am sorry to say there were several by that horrible trick of showing the white flag and then shooting the men who show themselves in answer to it. A Boer exhibited a white flag, and Lieutenant C. Wilford and Burton, of the Coldstream, disclosed themselves and advanced toward him. He shot the first named in the arm and the latter in the head, killing him. I am glad to say this assassin for you can dub him nothing else—is a prisoner in our hands.

"On the left part of the position, where the Northampton were stationed, a white flag was hoisted. Our men showed themselves, among them at the moment happened to be Mr. Knight, of the Morning Post. No sooner did they show than a smart fire was turned on them, severely wounding Mr. Knight, the officer of the company, and a private. Such tricks mislead the men, and I shall be sorry for the Boers whom our fellows got into with the bayonet. They'll pay off some old scores, and the bill is running up."

## Slaughter of Officers.

"When we had gained the first floor, so to speak, the Boers had retired to the upper ridge on the sky-line, and from there poured a heavy fire on us below them. The Northumberland Fusiliers, who had already sustained severe loss in officers this campaign, were destined to be again sufferers. A regiment up to the highest standard of infantry, always ready for any work, fatigue or otherwise, that is allotted them, with an active service record such as few can claim, they had at the commencement of the campaign as officers a group of gentlemen typical of everything best in the English character—of fine physique and downright good fellows in every way, general favorites with their brother soldiers throughout the camp. Of this original group very few remain unharmed, and we have hardly begun the war. They will need to be difficult to replace."

"Having gained our first position, it was only a matter of time before we could climb the second, for the Boer, though he will cling very tight to his original stand, once you move him, is inclined to keep going and make poor fight afterward. So I galloped off to the right flank, where a squadron of the Ninth and Rimington's Horse had gone forward, and got into position to cut off the Boer retreat."

## A Retreating General.

"We galloped out about twelve miles, in the open plain, but never a Boer did we see. There was cavalry also on the left flank—the same fate was in store for them. Whatever we may think of the Boer, there is no doubt he is an absolute master in the art of retreating. You scale a position, as we did, with 3,000 Boers in it, and though you put them to precipitate flight and capture their baggage and ammunition, as we did—they left everything behind—they yet disappear like phantoms in the dark. In two and three they retire as soon as things get too warm, and you never see them again."

"The cavalry got back to camp at 5 p. m., having started at 3 a. m.—a long day for horses. We found that the infantry which was soon accomplished, the

had been back in camp since 1 p. m. Now came the awful part of war—going round and inquiring who among your friends was killed or wounded. Our casualty list was very heavy (226), and I am afraid the Boer loss was not very considerable. Probably much the same as our own, but they have a wonderful way of removing their dead; so you can make no estimate of their probable loss. The Grenadiers were the chief sufferers, as was inevitable; but the Scots Guards had their share, and the Northumberland's loss in officers was appalling. I revisited the battlefield next day and was more than ever impressed with the great work performed the day before."

## A Master of Deceit.

After telling how they bivouaced for the night the correspondent goes on to describe the finding of the enemy at 5:30 a. m. the following day:

"He was occupying a beautiful position; indeed, his knack of choosing fine defensive positions is wonderful. There was a horseshoe of kopjes, some five or six small Ghazals surrounding a high platform. The Boers came into action and started bombarding the kopjes. As we shelled one moved into the next, till we came to one which they held on to. They also brought a heavy artillery fire to bear, which was extremely well served."

"The Lancers and Rimington's Horse had meantime been reconnoitering on the right, and came under a heavy fire, but escaped with the loss of a few horses and some slight casualties. After a bombardment lasting two hours the Naval Brigade and Ninth Brigade were deployed and advanced against the centre kopje, now held in considerable force by the enemy. There was no question of skirmishing for cover; on the contrary, they had to advance over the open, and an occasional shot being the only shelter."

"A tremendous fire was poured into them. Luckily khaki is very difficult to see in the grass, but over such ground our loss was bound to be considerable. Men were falling in all directions, but particularly in the ranks of the Naval Brigade, who occupied the centre of the line, and so faced the kopje. On their left were the Northumberland and Northampton; on their right the Lancashire and Yorkshires. The latter were subjected to a severe fire from the Boer artillery and had to edge in a little to their left."

## Officers Are Reckless.

"The Naval Brigade, blue-jackets and marines, filled to the brim with that courage for which the navy is so famous, scorned the idea of taking too much care of themselves, the officers in particular showing themselves with reckless courage in the heat of battle that I could see strike the ground all round them, and, with a rush after rush, rapidly gained the kopje."



THE BOERS AMBUSCADE AT MAGERSFONTEIN  
LONDON ILLUSTRATED NEWS

Brigade being closely followed by the Yorkshires and Lancashires.

"Instances of heroism are superfluous when every one was a hero, but Lieutenant Jones, R. M. L. I., was especially conspicuous. Severely wounded when crossing the deadly flat, he yet led his men up the tremendous climb."

"As we neared the top, the Boers retired before the bayonet could get a chance. We enfiladed the next kopje, which was strongly held, and considerable loss was inflicted on the Boers, who hastily retired. I afterward counted forty-five dead horses there. Boers were now in full retreat in all directions, and our guns poured shell after shell into them as they went, but again, in most masterly fashion, they evaded all our efforts to cut off their retreat. The cavalry pursued them, but whenever they approached a kopje they came under heavy fire."

## Horses Dead Beat.

"Pursuit under these conditions by cavalry alone is impossible. If supported by horse artillery they could clear the kopjes and possibly get past into the enemy, but we have no horse artillery, although the cavalry regiments have to perform all the reconnoitering duties and still be ready to pursue. The result is that their horses are now dead beat, but still the work must be done. Fortunately, we are in a horse country and hope to be able to replace casualties. We have lost over fifty animals since leaving Orange River."

And his opinion of the Boer as a man may be gathered from the following paragraph:

"Once more we have had examples of the treacherous character of the Boer. Captain Campbell and Captain Lord Douglas, of the Ninth Lancers, went to examine a position during the fight. They saw a single man, who beckoned to them to approach. This they did, and when within fifty yards of him he up with his rifle and shot Campbell's horse dead. Campbell jumped up behind Lord Douglas, and they galloped away, a second shot going through Campbell's pouch."

"This morning three officers' patrols went out to reconnoiter. Lieutenant Gordon Stirling, Ninth Lancers, with three men, came across a farm, from which some women came out to him. He approached the building, and when close up a smart fire was opened on him. He was shot through the arm, while one man was killed and another severely wounded."

The Daily Mail publishes the following excerpt from a letter sent home by Lieutenant P. G. Stirling, First King's Royal Rifles, describing the attack on Talana Hill: "Then an awful part happened. Our artillery, mistaking us for Boers, began firing on us. Colonel Gunning (commander of the Rifles), who was just below me, stood up and yelled out: 'Stop that firing.' These were the last words I heard him speak, but I believe his last words were: 'Remember you are Riflemen.' Of course we could not stand our men firing on us, so retired over the wall safely. I saw Nugent had been badly wounded, and being helped over by some men, so I took him over. When we got over the wall the scene was terrible. Three of our officers shot within five yards of one another. Pochell and Taylor dead, Boulbee wounded in the groin."

## Difficulty of Transport.

The correspondent of the Pall Mall Gazette, writing from Esicourt, November 17, makes this comment on the difficulties that beset General Buller in his advance to the relief of Ladysmith: "It would be well if people would bear in mind what transport means when they talk of General Buller in Pretoria by January. Let them imagine the piles of food, blankets, tents and the other necessities of bare life in Africa. Again, let them consider the difficulties of transport; bridges blown up, permanent-way disabled, dependence on untrained mules and worse than untrained drivers. All these things must be taken into consideration before criticising too strongly."

"The Daily Chronicle prints a letter from Private E. Dunne, of the Grenadier Guards, writing from Orange River, November 18, which suggests that this particular

hilarity of the British public. He says:

"The prisoners seemed struck with us. We are not the boys they had been told we were. They thought we were a lot of boys and did not want to fight, and were crying to go home. We have a novel way of catching their scouts. We have some of catching them to a rope on the hills, and we get just over the crest of course, they see the birds and they think there is no one about till we have secured them."

## Humors of the War.

The campaign has its humors, too, as is shown by the following bits from a Daily Telegraph correspondent's letter:

"I went out on a long reconnaissance to the north with a friend on Monday. We took an orderly with us, and with loaded revolvers started off at 9:45. It was the first peep into the enemy's country that has been made, and gave me rather a good feel. We rode along the railway, spying all round very carefully as we went."

"I came to a farmhouse after going about four miles. Saw some pigs outside, so thought it must be inhabited. Drew revolvers and cocked them. The orderly, my friend, and I advanced on opposite sides. Saw no one; so, with bated breath, dismounted and knocked at the door, saying: 'Who's in?' No answer; so pushed open the door, while my friend covered my advance with his revolver. Walked into a dark room, heard a grunt, and fell over another pig. This completely unnerved both of us, so we retired, having found nothing."

"The Northumberland Fusiliers, in their entrenched camp, about half a mile from here, had a picket of three men posted 300 yards out. This picket, in the dark, saw something advance, challenged it, received no reply, so fired. The thing still advanced, so they fired again. The alarm, of course, sounded, and was taken up in all the other camps."

"In our camp, at the time of the alarm, we had got a patrol out to go and see what were thought to be lights in a kopje a little way off. They turned out to be fireflies, and the Fusiliers' enemy to be mules."

## They Want Cigarettes.

Major H. Capel-Cure, of the Gloucestershire Regiment, writing on November 1 from his brother, Francis Capel-Cure, from his quarters as a prisoner in Pretoria, says:

"The Boers seem inclined to treat us well, but keep us prisoners, and don't allow us out on parole, which is hard lines. They say they will forward letters and telegrams, but of course they read the letters first. They say also that they will give us letters if they arrive, so address them to Pretoria, via Delagoa Bay. But bear in mind that your letters will be read before being delivered to me, likewise mine to you; so one can't talk of one's health and business matters, if any. Don't send me any parcels except condensed foods and perhaps small quantities of tobacco and cigarettes."

Writing on November 4, he says: "I am well and strong, and they do their best to look after us here. Yesterday they gave us all a shirt, pair of socks, towel, pajamas and a couple of blankets, also soap, candles and matches—all things sorely needed. We have been moved off the rag carpet and brought down into a good building, which used to be a national school, and here we have beds—bedsteads—a luxury—and live eight or nine in a room."

## SIR EDWIN ARNOLD ON LORD ROBERTS.

Sir Edwin Arnold writes the following personal sketch of Field Marshal Lord Roberts for the London Daily Telegraph:

"The chronicle of our good and gallant field marshal is one of untaken military good fortune. In addition to countless other qualities of the perfect warrior he possesses that which Napoleon demanded from his generals—good luck. Perhaps that is only another name for the foresight, vigilance, invention and resource which Fortune is wont to follow, but the briefest glance at the services of Lord Roberts shows a triumphant career, which in itself explains—apart from his personal gifts—the intense faith and confidence in him by his contemporaries. As a general, an officer in the army, a statesman, a writer, a poet, a man of letters, he has been a success in every field of human endeavor."

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who was to serve him  
subsequent campaigns.

## He Learned to C

As Assistant Quartermaster in Abyssinia and in the Le he learned to marshal and As commander of the Kurat the outset of the Afghan began to handle them, and t charge of the British forces frontier in those dark days w with the massacre of our Embas bul. He was occupying that turbu during 1870-80, when Ayob Khan Burrows at Malwand—a situation more serious than can result from t porary success of the Boers.

Who does not remember how B broke away from Calcutta with 9,000 marched then with superb command the wild country to Kandahar, ene after three silent and strenuous weel grapple triumphantly with Ayob, a restore the prestige of our flag? In he was named to succeed Sir George i in Natal, but peace was unfortunately eluded ere he could arrive, or the p troubles would, perhaps, not be upon

## His Last Campaign.

In 1880 Lord Roberts successfully led a Burmese Expedition, and closed his Orient career as Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army, having been, as a subordinate officer beforehand, twenty-three times mentioned in dispatches, and eight times publicly thanked by the Viceroy or the Commander-in-Chief.

Created a peer in 1892 under the title of Lord Roberts, of Kandahar and Waterford, he received the baton of field marshal in 1895, and has been a familiar and popular figure since at home, notably on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee, when "Bo upon his white Indian Arab, under the c of St. Paul's, was cheered to the e by the people at large, who love and u him as much as his own soldiers, and th to a man are heart and soul believers i the "little gunner" who never loses a bat

To those who, like myself, have the honor and pleasure of his friendship it will be well known that the splendid martial record of the Field Marshal accounts but partially for his boundless popularity with the troops. The deeper secret lies in his personality, where the strongest virtues of the soldier blend with the simplest and most sterling qualities of the faultless gentleman and faithful comrade.

I shall never forget a happy morning which I passed in his company riding round the walls of Delhi, at the siege of which, in 1857, he had assisted as a subaltern in the artillery.

## Reminiscences of 1857.

Sir Frederick Roberts, as he was then called, commanded in 1855 the Northern Division of the Army of Delhi, and after breakfast in the headquarters tent I had the privilege of visiting with him the chief spots of interest in the memorable siege. As I have written in my "India Revisited":

"Sir Frederick Roberts was riding over from his camp to survey the scene of the forthcoming movement, and kindly explained the nature of those siege operations in which he bore part as a subaltern in 1857. So dense is now the forest-like growth of mango, fig, and acacia trees around the walls that a visitor is at first puzzled to comprehend how the British gunners could possibly have sighted the bastions which they desired to reduce. But the General makes it all clear by telling us that the besieging force sent parties out each night to fell all the trees within a belt of six hundred yards from the walls, and he points to a cypress, still a mass of ruin, 'which was prepared night and day.' And then he adds: 'I am pitched at present, with my headquarters camp, on the precise spot which I occupied in 1857 in my little tent.' The whole history of the period lay condensed in that sentence, and the explanation of it was to be had in the leafless tree illustrated by those two twin cypresses of the Kashmiri Gate."

There is nothing he is afraid of on earth or sea—except a black cat, which Lord Roberts cannot abide.

With such a general and such soldiers as he will command a happy finish will surely come to this business, the present seriousness of which seems over-emphasized.

Arnold  
Constable & Co.  
Paris Lingerie  
Night Robes, Petticoats.  
Flannel Waists.  
Children's Wear  
Coats, Jackets, Se  
Dancing Dr

Ber